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SUBJECT: PDAS VOLKER ENCOURAGES SLOVENES TO KEEP TRANS  
ATLANTIC FOCUS

Classified By: COM Thomas B. Robertson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) In meetings April 10 with Government of Slovenia officials, EUR PDAS Kurt Volker reinforced the importance of maintaining a strong trans-Atlantic dialogue during Slovenia's EU Presidency. Discussions at the MFA focused on the Western Balkans including an idea suggested by MFA Security Policy Chief Stanislav Vidovic that the Adriatic Charter be expanded to include all countries in the region with NATO aspirations - no matter how far off. Volker assured Vidovic that the NATO summit in Bucharest would be substantive and hoped it would include issuing invitations for new members. In a later dinner with International Affairs Advisor to the Prime Minister, Andrej Rahten, Volker expanded on themes raised earlier with FM Rupel (septel) including the importance of a strong EU position on Cuba, changing the tone of the dialogue on Missile Defense, the need to work closely on Iran and other Mid East issues, and the best way to help the Western Balkans to move forward. End Summary.

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NATO - Engaging with Neighbors  
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2, (C) Following his meeting with FM Rupel, PDAS Volker met with the Director of the America's Division Roman Kirn and the Director of Security Policy Stanislav Vidovic. Vidovic was curious to know what the Bucharest NATO Summit would accomplish since he felt there was not much advancement on various internal debates. Vidovic said he was puzzled by France's behavior in NATO and asked if its desire to be on the military and civilian budget committee indicated it was drawing closer to military structures. And finally, Vidovic suggested that if two of the three members of the Adriatic Charter were going to be invited to start with a membership action plan in NATO, it might make sense to expand the Charter. This way Albania is not left behind on its own and it provides a venue for other countries to draw closer to NATO without having to join Partnership for Peace or other formal structures.

13. (C) Volker assured Vidovic that the Bucharest NATO summit would be substantive and that he hoped NATO would be extending invitations to aspirant countries. Of course, they would have to be fully prepared to join and there were no guarantees. All would have to work hard in the next year. Volker thought the idea of expanding the Adriatic Charter interesting, especially if some current members were left behind in the next round of NATO expansion. Regarding France, Volker thought the French were protecting their interests and were generally wary of our proposals on common

policy. Commenting on missile defense, Volker told Vidovic and Kirn that the U.S. wanted to reorient the current discussion so that the U.S., NATO and Russia would be working together on missile defense broadly, with the U.S. national missile defense programs as one element in a wider context of cooperation in facing missile threats.

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EU - Think Trans-Atlantically  
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14. (C) Turning the discussion to U.S. - EU issues, Volker explained to Kirn and Vidovic that the U.S. - EU relationship was not limited to strictly bilateral issues, but encompassed all the things we do together in the world, and that, in practice, we structure our relationship along the lines of the EU pillars. After discussing what the timing might be of a U.S. - EU summit in 2008, Kirn asked about the declaration which would result. He suggested it would be better if it could be shorter and focused on fewer issues. Volker said that while the declarations can be very long and may lack crispness, they have been very useful documents, and the press rely on this detail in order to report the results of the summit accurately. He suggested that if the GOS wanted to make sure issues were shaped properly in the press, they should focus attention on comments the Prime Minister would make in his press conferences. Volker's parting advice was to keep things simple. Decide on what Slovenia wanted to accomplish and pursue those issues. He said to avoid "wedge" issues and above all, keep thinking trans-Atlantically, and the U.S. will help make things work smoothly.

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Russia in the Region  
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15. (C) During Dinner with the prime minister's Advisor for International Affairs, Andrej Rahten, Volker and Rahten discussed Russia and shared the view that it has taken on the role of spoiler in the region vis a vis Kosovo and missile defense. Rahten said his impression was that Russia would continue to be obstructive on Kosovo, but it might stop short of using its veto in the Security Council. He viewed Russia's aggressive response to missile defense as tactically successful. Interestingly, Russia has not demarched Slovenia on either the Kosovo or MD issue. It has come in, however, to protest about the removal of the Russian WW II statue in Estonia. Rahten said that Slovenia engages Russia primarily through the Forum of Slavic Cultures.

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Cooperating on the Middle East  
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16. (C) In explaining how the recent visit of Iranian FM Mottaki came about, Rahten admitted the GOS had been unaware of President Drnovsek's initiative to send letters to the President and Ayatollah in Iran. He said that prior to the visit, PM Jansa had talked with EU Foreign Affairs chief Javier Solana who agreed that Jansa could meet with Mottaki, but counseled him not to deviate from the EU position on nuclear enrichment. Jansa has still only received a half page readout on the President's hour long meeting with Mottaki, and Rahten said the GOS was extremely embarrassed by this whole episode. Noting that FM Rupel would travel to the Middle East in early May, Rahten said they would be sure to consult with the EU's special representative on the region prior to travel. Volker noted the U.S. - EU coordination on the Middle East is very good and we rely on Solana and the EU Presidency to keep that cooperation going. He cautioned, however, that visible non-coordination between the PM and the President such as on the visit by Mottaki could not be allowed to happen during Slovenia's Presidency.

¶7. (C) On EU issues, Volker reinforced the hope that in the wake of Spanish FM Moratinos' visit to Cuba, the EU would make a strong joint statement on the importance of allowing the Cuban people to choose their own government. Rahten asked about a January 2008 visit to the U.S. for Prime Minister Jansa to launch the EU Presidency. Volker said this is something they would need to take up with the White House, closer to the date.

¶8. (U) PDAS Volker cleared this cable.  
ROBERTSON